\<Report\>

The Contribution of the Printing Press to the Reform Movement and the Digital Challenge Today

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Preliminary remarks

A very warm welcome to the participants of this year's UBS Publishers Convention here in Seoul. Being in such a multinational event, first of all I have to ask your understanding that in my lecture on "The Contribution of the Printing Press to the Reform Movement ⋯ and the Digital Challenge Today" I will concentrate on the German-/Luther-side of the Reform Movement, leaving aside the Swiss branch of Zwingli and Calvin (indeed very close to Germany) and also the reformation movements in other countries of the world. But as you will see the Luther-side is already more than enough stuff and it has an exemplary character.

As the title indicates the lecture will have two parts: The first one about "The Contribution of the Printing Press to the Reform Movement" will be mainly historical － looking back to the origin of Reformation in the 16th century. I will start by giving you some information about the 2017th Jubilee of Luther's Reformation and its historical roots, followed by some insights in Gutenberg's inventions on the technical side of the game and the benefit the reformation took out of it. The new printing technology did not only work for texts, but also for pictures which－quite modern － played an important role for the popularization of the new ideas. As a special highlight for Bible Societies at the end of the first

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part there is to tell the incredible story of the bestseller to which Luther's Bible translation developed from the very first moment.

The second part will look into the development of the digital media today and ask what they mean for Bible Societies. Somehow they give us chances similar to the new printing technique in Luther's time. But at the same time they confront us, the Bible Societies, with completely new challenges. After 500 years of dominance of the "Gutenberg Galaxis" the 20th century saw new electronic media coming up. Radio and Television changed the way how people get information and towards the end of the 20th century the triumph of the Internet began. The digital media changed our habits of reading. We have to read more and more in less time – a sort of fast "informational reading" developed beside or instead of the traditional "deep reading" which books – and especially the Bible – require. It is the special challenge of us Bible Societies to find ways and concepts for keeping the Bible present and showing its relevance to and for our "brave new world" of reading. As example of such a concept I will tell you about the BasisBible – the Cross Media Bible Translation and Publishing concept developed by the German Bible Society, combining translation, extra material and Social Media engagement.

1. The Contribution of the Printing Press to the Reform Movement of the 16th century

1.1. 2017 – 500 years of Luther's Reformation

The Year 2017 will be a special one for the Protestant world: It is the year when we celebrate 500 years of Reformation. The Protestant churches in Germany and many other countries are preparing themselves for this jubilee, and so does the Germany Bible Society. Whereas in the previous centenaries the reformation jubilee was a highly national German event, the 2017 event will concentrate on the remaining importance of the reformatory theology. One of the incontestable highlights of the year will be a complete new revision of the Luther Bible which the German Bible Society will bring out at the Frankfurt Book Fair 2016. At the same time Germany as motherland of Luther's

reformation will present itself as host, inviting churches and people from all over the world to visit the places of Reformation and to find out how a (re-)discovery of Reformation can strengthen and encourage Christian faith today.

The 31st of October 1517 (the Saturday before All Saints' Day) is regarded as the starting point of Reformation. It is the date when Martin Luther is said to have nailed a placard carrying his famous 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. (While tradition is very sure about this date, today's scholars doubt whether there ever was any kind of nailing by whatever means. But one thing is absolutely sure: The Theses themselves are a first point of crystallization of what was to become the reformatory theology.)

Reformation theology in a nutshell amounts to: Only God's grace can make us righteous before Good. In Christ, God does not ask our efforts for righteousness but gives it to us as a gift – without any condition we have to fulfill. This is the essence of Luther's theology. Straightaway, this brought him into conflict with the Roman-Catholic Church of his time, especially with the practice of indulgence trade which was very common in the beginning of the 16th century. The mere thought of indulgence contributing to the reconciliation between a human being and God was absolutely contradictory to Luther's insight that only the Blood of Christ redeems people from all guilt and sin. So Luther first addressed the Archbishop of Magdeburg to complain about this misuse of the Christian message. Anticipating the Archbishops indifference to his concern, Luther at the same time made his critique public through the 95 Theses. He invited the learned public to a disputation – but no one responded. Nevertheless, in very short time his Theses were widely distributed in print, and quite a few people responded with enthusiastic agreement⋯ With this distribution we already touch the subject of the contribution of the printing press to the reform movement. But I will put this aside for a short moment.

For the moment, let's go back in history a couple of more years: Luther's reformation was neither the first nor the only call for a fundamental change of the medieval church. Already the monastic reform orders fought against the abundance of wealth and the worldliness of the Church. And there were the efforts of Petrus Waldes (d. before 1218) in France, John Wyclif (d. 1384) in England, and Jan Hus (ca. 1369-1415) in Bohemia who sharply criticized the Church hierarchy, especially the Popes of their time, for a life and administration

of their office which didn't have much in common with the spirit and origin of Christian faith. All these efforts drew their power from the Bible as criterion and source of faith and its renewal. But for the official church of their time it was relatively easy to get rid of these uncomfortable movements. Either they remained within the church – obedient against the Pope like the reform orders. Or they were consequently suppressed by the church authorities who called them heretic and persecuted them – up to the burning of Jan Hus at the Council of Constance, 600 years ago on July 6th, 1415.

But what had worked up to 1415 did no longer work 100 years later. The Reformation that was initialized by Martin Luther could no longer be suppressed as a heretic movement like all his predecessors. And this indeed had a lot to do with the new technology of the printing press.

1.2. Johannes Gutenberg and his invention of the movable type printing technology

During the 15th century we see the transition from medieval to modern times. It was a time of far-reaching cultural changes: It was the time when the Europeans discovered the Americas – new worlds to them, with the consequence of ongoing changes in politics and trade. It was the time when Renaissance and Humanism opened people's minds for new models of thinking. And it was the time of great inventions, among which Gutenberg's improvement of the printing technique was one of if not *the* most important.

Johannes Gutenberg (ca. 1400 – 1468) was not the inventor of printing. Woodcut printing was well known long before his time and in many places of the world. But this was an expensive method and not adequate for any sort of what one could call "mass production". The printing was done from one wooden block which had to be cut before, and this block could not be used very often before it was worn out. Therefore texts – and also the Bible – normally were simply reproduced by handwriting – for many monasteries at that time a considerable source of their income. What Gutenberg did was to divide the text in all its different elements – letters, numbers, punctuation marks, blank space etc. And he invented a method of producing all these elements, the so called "characters", in an "industrial" way. The new device he created was a hand mold

that allowed the fast creation of metal types in large quantities. For every
character he produced a matrix which was put into the mold to cast in a special
alloy of lead, tin and other admixtures. At the end one got single characters
which could be combined for typesetting and be reused quite often. The more
copies of each character a printer owned the more text he could typeset and the
more economic he could run his business.

Interestingly enough, it was Gutenberg's aim that the printing characters he
created should be as beautiful as if they were handwritten – whereas today
teachers would like the pupils to write as beautifully as printed. Perhaps this has
to do with Gutenberg's original profession as goldsmith. The most famous
printed work Gutenberg produced was the Latin Bible (Vulgate) of 42 lines (per
page). This Bible was printed in two volumes with all in all 1282 pages. 180
copies were printed altogether – 49 have survived until today and are still
considered to be among the most beautiful books of the world! Looking at the
technical side of the book one can distinguish 290 individual characters!

But Gutenberg did not only revolutionize the printing plate, he also invented
the matching printing press that would meet the demands of 'mass production':
the movable type printing press. He did that by improving the screw presses –
common since Roman times for wine making or getting other sorts of fruit juice
or oil. Gutenberg adjusted it in a way that allowed an even pressure on the paper.
Then he combined the platen with a flat and movable table where the sheets of
paper could rapidly be changed. But still not enough! Along with that Gutenberg
also developed a new sort of printing ink because the one which was used for
wood printing was too liquid for the new production method and took too much
time for drying.

In the end, everything was prepared for the mass-production of printed
material. One even speaks of the "Printing Revolution" that stands at the
beginning of a new era of information sharing. From the middle of the 15th
century on, printing spread incredibly fast throughout Europe. This has mainly
two reasons: one being financial difficulties of Gutenberg himself which led
some of his printers to leave his workshop and go to other towns, opening up
printing businesses of their own. The second reason lies in political changes in
Gutenberg's hometown Mainz in the year 1462 (six years before Gutenberg's
death) which led many inhabitants to leave the town, among them again some of

the printers. In a few decades the new printing technology spread to more than 200 towns within Europe. In the year 1500 the production of printed material already reached an amount of more than 20 Millions of copies.

The fact that now new ideas could spread as fast as never before, can hardly be overestimated. The existence of an interesting and affordable (!) range of printed material supported the education of the people and vice versa. The ability to read and write was no longer the privilege of the rich, and knowledge became accessible for everybody. Thus – in a way – the fundament was laid for what much later became the Enlightenment, modern sciences and democratic structures of the society.

1.3. How the Reform Movement benefitted from the new printing technology

But before looking too far into the future let's come back to the Reform Movement of the 16th century and have a look on how this new movement benefitted from the printing technology. There are two lines to pursue: (1) the spread of the ideas of the Reformation and the special role illustrations have in this context, and (2) the triumph of Luther's Bible translation.

1.3.1. The spread of the ideas of Reformation and the specific role of illustrations

From its very beginning the ideas of the Reformation spread from city to city and from village to village through broadsheets and pamphlets, most of which were written by the heads of the Reformation Movement, mainly Martin Luther himself. Together with the beginning of Luther's activities as Reformer we see a considerable rise of broadsheets and pamphlets circulating in Germany (in the short period between 1518 and 1520 about 300.000 copies of Luther's broadsheets and pamphlets were spread throughout the country). These writings were read aloud in public meeting places in many towns and villages, and the printers really struggled to meet the public need for reprints or new prints. Luther for instance allowed some of his sermons to be printed to bring his theological insights to the people of Germany. Others are theological treatises, like his famous *Sermon on Indulgences and Grace*, dating from March 1518.

Other leaders of the Wittenberg branch of Reformation, like Philipp
Melanchthon, published similar writings. These pamphlets normally had 15−20,
maximum 70−90 pages, very often with woodcuts as title illustration.

This brings us to the special role of illustrations for the popularization of the
Reformation. There is one name inextricably linked to this context: Cranach. It
stands for two people: Lucas Cranach the Elder and Lucas Cranach the Younger.
Together with their highly skilled staff they became the painters of the
Reformation. Cranach the Elder lived in Wittenberg when Luther began his fight
against the evils of the Church of his time. He already was Luther's friend when
Wittenberg suddenly became the center of events which at the end should
change not only Germany but also many other countries in Europe and
worldwide. Early on, Cranach had adopted Luther's ideas and decided on
supporting him. He supplied the illustrations for Luther's Bible-Translation and
for the reformer's pamphlets. Together with Luther he developed the type of
"pedagogic images" which depicted Luther's theology. And it was also Cranach
who is accountable for the portraits from which we know how Luther looked
like. So Lucas Cranach the Elder developed a Protestant iconography while at
the same time creating a painted chronology of Luther's life.

(a) Images as weapons in the fight for the right faith

As an example for polemic pictures in Luther's fight against the Pope we can
look on Cranach's *Passional of Christ and Antichrist* dating from 1521. It was a
small book with only 13 woodcuts from Cranachs workshop contrasting Jesus
and the Pope. Philipp Melanchthon and Johann Schwertfeger (another friend of
Martin Luther and a scholar of law) added short pieces of text, mainly quotations
from the Gospels and from papal decrees. The book was printed anonymously in
Wittenberg and immediately became extremely popular. It saw several reprints
already in the year of its original publishing. In the early 16th century, a
"Passional" usually contained stories about the Saints. In this special "Passional"
it was different. Here, on each double-page spread of the book we find one scene
from the life and passion of Christ, combined with one scene from the Pope's
activities depicting him as Antichrist. A typical example can be seen in the
pictures about indulgence. One double-page spread shows a picture of Jesus
cleaning the Temple and driving out the salespersons from the Holy Place on the

one side. It is obvious that Jesus does not at all allow this sort of moneymaking in God's house. On the other side we see the Pope on his throne signing letters of indulgence whereas people are bringing more money to the amount that already lies on the table.

Another pamphlet of this extremely polemical sort appeared two years later in 1523 and immediately became as popular as the "Passional". It was called: *The interpretation of two terrible beasts: the Donkey of the Pope in Rome and the Calf of the Monk in Freyberg*. Lucas Cranach supplied two woodcuts for the book, the text was written by Luther and Melanchthon. The two "beasts" the pamphlet deals with are said to have really existed. The donkey of the Pope was a figure which had a female human body with the head of a donkey. Arms and legs were covered by scales, one hand and one foot are formed like hoofs of an ox, and the other foot is formed like the claw of an eagle. The beast had a tale beginning with a mask of the devil and ending in the head of a dragon. Supposedly such a beast was found dead at the river Tiber in Rome. Therefore the woodcut shows it in front of the Angel's Castle, the Pope's residence in Rome. The calf of the monk was a calf with a big piece of skin in its neck which resembles the cowl of a monk's habit. A calf with such a piece of skin was actually found in the year 1520 in a cow slaughtered in the city of Freiberg, Saxony. Both beasts were shown in many broadsheets circulation of this time. But the Reformers used them for their own purposes by giving a very special interpretation: Luther described the calf looking like the cartoon of a monk as image of the monastic life which has lost its moral integrity. And Melanchthon wrote that the beast with the head of the donkey in front of the Pope's residence stands for the Pope not being the legitimate head of the Church. So both beasts were regarded as signs that the church as it was – along with its Pope and its monastic orders – would soon come to its end.

These pictures provoked what today we would call a "hate-attack". Even people who could not read were immediately faced with the Reformer's criticism of the Pope living in splendor and collecting huge amounts of money by the practice of indulgences and of the rich monasteries where the monks lived like kings while the people in the villages had to struggle for their living. Everybody had to take a stand for or against the reformation – and the amount of people sympathizing with the Reformation Movement grew rapidly. In the

beginning, the Roman Church had nothing to put against this sort of criticism. The old ways of reacting — censorship, burning of the respective scriptures or punishment of the responsible person — didn't work any longer. It was only some years later that the Roman side developed similar cartoons and broadsheets to fight against the Wittenberg movement.

(b) Images as a means of educating people in the new faith

Luther did not only use images as a tool for his polemic against the Church but also developed a new type of illustration which was determined to educate people in the Reformed faith. The most famous one is called *Law and Grace*. It shows Luther's theology of justification and was developed by Lucas Cranach the Elder, together with Luther and Melanchthon. In the course of time, different versions of the image were created in the workshop of the Cranach family. What I will explain to you now is a diptych by Lucas Cranach the Elder dating from 1535.

The left half of the diptych is entitled "Law". The Law, revealed in the Ten Commandments and proclaimed by the Old Testament prophets (lower right side of the picture) gives people God's guidelines for living. Yet, the story of the Fall (upper left) shows that they are not able to give God his due. Human life is threatened by sin and death (center). Humans cannot earn their own salvation; they are closer to death and destruction (lower left) than to the living God who has revealed himself in Christ (upper center). The right half of the diptych is entitled "Grace". The New Testament, with the Gospel of the cross of Christ, brings into the center the grace which God shows to humanity. This message is already present in the Old Testament when Moses lifted up the bronze snake in the dessert so that the people of Israel might be healed (upper left). In the same way Christ had to be raised up to the cross to redeem humankind from death and sin. No one is righteous before God by only obeying the Law or by his own deeds but only by faith in God's love and His grace. John the Baptist points people (lower left) to Christ as the Lamb of God who bears the sins of the world (lower center). God comes to help the poor, wretched and oppressed, as Luke's Nativity Story (upper center) clearly shows by the Annunciation and the message to the shepherds. By his resurrection Christ has conquered sin and death (lower right). Now Christ has ascended into heaven (upper right) and sits

at God's right hand. That means: God is no longer far from human beings – through faith in Christ they are bound together with God. What a picture! This highly complex core theme of Luther's Reformation all in one picture!

Lucas Cranach the Younger painted a similar picture as centerpiece for the altar of the church St. Peter and Paul in the city of Weimar. The image was completed in 1555 – two years after Cranach the Elder had died. The story this altar piece tells goes one significant step further than the picture I just showed you. Son Cranach added Martin Luther together with his father to the composition. They stand under the cross next to John the Baptist. Luther points to the Bible which he translated into German. Between him and the Baptist we see father Cranach. The blood from the wound in the side of the crucified goes directly to his head and indicates that he has part of God's redeeming grace.

What has been said about the polemic pictures applies in the same way for these pedagogic images: They make the center of the Protestant faith understandable – even for illiterate people. They attract, convince and confirm people: this (new) Faith is meant for each and every one.

From the very beginning, pictures from Lucas Cranach's workshop were part of the editions of Luther's Bible translation. In the New Testament – published in 1522 – we have 21 full page illustrations in the Book of Revelation which was very popular at that time. When the full Bible came out it was completely illustrated by woodcuts and we know that Luther personally took part in the draft of these illustrations which were realized by a man from Cranach's workshop of whom we only know the initials – the so called master MS.

(c) *Cranach's portraits of Martin Luther as image-campaign for the Reform Movement*

It was Cranach's special contribution to all next generations that we know how Luther looked like. If you think of Martin Luther you will automatically remember one of Lucas Cranach's famous images. From Johannes Gutenberg, who died only 15 years before Luther was born, we don't have any historic picture, but from Luther and other celebrities of his time we do have quite a few – due to Lucas Cranach and his workshop. They very well fit and complement the 'picture program' described above.

It was not by chance that Cranach did this job. The first picture was

commissioned by the court of Frederick the Wise of Saxony, Luther's temporal ruler, whose secretary and advisor Georg Spalatin was a good friend of the Reformer. The small university of Wittenberg, which at that time was only some 20 years old, had become quite famous because of Luther's activity and attracted many students. Spalatin wanted to strengthen this development and thought it would be a good idea to make Luther even more popular by getting him portrayed by a local artist.

In 1520 Cranach created two copper engravings of Luther as monk of the Order of St. Augustine. Obviously the officials were not too happy with the first one because Cranach had to re-do it. Of this first, probably more authentic picture, only very few copies still exist today. They are most likely the result of test printings. Here Luther looks very determined and uncompromising. The second one tells a different story, by putting Luther in some kind of niche. At that time, this was the way Saints were depicted. Furthermore Luther's face looks milder and his eyes more contemplative. In one hand he holds the Bible, with the other he seems involved in explaining the insights he got from it. Instead of a stubborn monk we see a wise man, an authority of faith, ready to enter into any discussion that one wanted to begin with him. This was the Luther the Court of Saxony wanted to show. Cranach got the permission to print the picture ‒ which again spread rapidly throughout the country. The words under both portraits mean: "Luther himself creates the lasting portrait of his spirit (in his writings), the wax of Lucas [Cranach] only creates the transitory traces of his face."

Two years later, in 1522, Cranach portrayed Luther as Knight George (Junker Jörg). The picture tells yet another story: It shows Luther's appearance while he lived incognito on the Wartburg where he translated the New Testament. The woodcut shows him as man who was willing and strong enough to resist the church authorities of his time ‒ a man with an ascetic coat and the beard of a philosopher.

After Luther had married Katharina von Bora in 1525 Cranach regularly took portraits from him which let us take part in his becoming older. From now on Luther is no longer depicted as a sort of hero but as husband and experiences theologian. Cranach shows him in an almost private way ‒ a scholar who could be addressed by everybody to ask any theological question: very appealing and

inviting.

Looking back on the development of these images one really gets the impression of a very modern image-campaign presenting the Reformer as strong and reliable guarantor of his principles. Through his portraits Cranach gave a face to the Reformation Movement that is still vivid today. And more than that: The fact that these pictures exist has a high symbolical relevance: Luther and the other Reformers are portrait in the same way as before only the rich and influential leaders of the mundane and ecclesiastical power: kings, rulers or prince bishops. To be portrait like this was no longer the privilege of the aristocracy but also suitable for the masterminds of the Reform Movement. One could say: Altar, pulpit and baptismal now range on the same level as scepter, crown and throne. This corresponds exactly to the new self-consciousness of the ordinary people which Luther puts like that in his famous writing "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate" (dating from 1525): "Whoever has been baptized may boast that he has already been ordained as priest, bishop and pope". Or, even more pointedly: Whoever came out of baptism even deserves the pontifical office. Thus even these portraits of the Reformers play an important role in promoting the basic ideas and ideals of the Reformation.

1.3.2. The story of the bestseller "Luther Bible"

After all these picture stories it's now time to look into the incredible success of Luther's Bible as printed book which certainly would not have been possible without Gutenberg's new printing technology.

It was the 21st of September 1522 when the first part of Luther's Bible translation was published in print in Wittenberg. It was the New Testament that Luther had translated during his compulsory protective custody at the Wartburg during the previous year. His translation was completed in the unbelievably short time of eleven week. Assuming he worked seven days a week, that means three chapters a day, while Luther was also writing other things at the same time (don't tell this second part to today's Bible translators!). The publication date in September determined the name "September Testament." Between 3000 and 5000 copies were printed – an unusually large print run in those days. The title page did not say more than: The New Testament German ("Das Newe

Testament Deutzsch") and the place: Wittenberg. Neither the translator, nor the printer or the year was mentioned. The book was rather expensive: The price was half a guilder − that was the price for 26 pound of beef or pork, 10 pound butter or 160 eggs. Only a few people knew that Martin Luther was the translator whose name at that time only started to become more and more popular.

Nobody could foresee the success of this book − printed without mentioning the translator, in a very small town with not more than 2500 inhabitants at an edge of Germany. But nevertheless the unexpected became true − the book became a real "bestseller". It had to be reprinted less than a quarter of a year later in December 1522 − this edition is called "December Testament". In the same year a pirated edition appeared in Basel, followed in the next year by twelve more pirated editions (originating in Basel and cities in the south of Germany). Beside that, the book was immediately translated into Dutch and there were several authorized and pirated editions in the Netherlands.

Two years after the September Testament the printers added the Name "Mart. Luther" and the year (1524) to the book. In the thirteen years up to the publication of the full Bible in 1534, there were 87 printings of Luther's translation plus 19 in the dialect of North Germany (Niederdeutsch), this means altogether 106 editions, an average of 9 per year. In the 24 years between 1522 and Luther's death in 1546 we have about 430 editions (full Bibles and parts of the Bible) published, an average of 17 per year − which shows the increasing number of Bibles distributed. When Luther died, most probably every second or third German family had some edition of Luther's Bible.

The importance of the immediate access of the people to the Bible in their mother tongue cannot be overestimated. No Church hierarchy was needed anymore as mediator between man and God. In questions of faith people were responsible for themselves − and this consciousness also changed their understanding of themselves. What we see here is one of the roots of our modern self-understanding as autonomous individuals.

1.3.3. Technological innovation and theological reformation − a successful combination

The success of Luther's Bible translation was without doubt due to Luther

being a genius as a Bible translator. There were German translations of the Bible before him, but a 19th -century Catholic (!) scholar (Ignaz Döllinger) summarized the difference between Luther and his predecessors in five words: "They stammered, but he spoke." Luther really used and created a language people could understand. It was his idea to "look at people's mouth", which means: "to inquire the mother in the home, the children in the street, the common man in the market place" and get the Bible translation "guided by their language" and "the way they speak". But this is not the only secret of his success.

There is much tribute to be paid to Luther as a Bible translator. But yet again, without the contribution of the printing press to the Reform Movement the success of his writings and Bible translation cannot be explained: From what I told you it is obvious that such a success would simply have been impossible before Gutenberg's "Printing Revolution". It was indeed a very lucky coincidence that the Wittenberg Reform Movement could benefit so much from the new printing technology. At the beginning Luther's opponents didn't really have anything to put against this 'new media campaign' (to call it like that). They still fought with the old means of Papal bulls and resolutions of diets where the Pope's interests always conflicted with the different interests of the German Emperor and the many regional rulers. At the same time Luther's broadsheets and pamphlets took their way through the country and beyond.

It was only with considerable delay that Luther's opponents began to use broadsheets and pamphlets for their own purposes, trying now to make the Protestant side look ridiculous. And as well, the Roman side did not have anything to put against Luther's Bible translation into the mother-tongue. Not until 1527 – after all, five years after Luther's September Testament –we see a "Roman-Catholic" translation of the New Testament by Hieronymus Emser. The Romans learned quickly. A Roman translation of the full Bible, done by the Dominican friar Johannes Dietenberg, was published the same year as Luther's translation. But both Roman-Catholic editions drew heavily on Luhter's text, changing mainly special translations that contradicted the 'old' faith. But the Catholic competitors never became as popular as Luther's Bible, probably because Bible reading was so important for the Protestant faith and so much recommended by the Reformers themselves. To put it in a nutshell: Luther was

always one step ahead in the use of the new media. He combined technological innovation and theological reformation in a really brilliant and extremely successful way. One can only learn from him.

2. The Digital Challenge Today

2.1. Beyond the Gutenberg-Galaxy: Reading goes digital

2.1.1. An intermediate stage: The electronic media of the 20th century

Now we have to leave the late middle age era and move to our contemporary situation. Not 500 but 53 years ago, in 1962 the Canadian philosopher Herbert Marshall McLuhan published his famous book *The Gutenberg Galaxy*. This "galaxy" is described as a world dominated by printed material as the main media of spreading information. At that time, McLuhan already saw the end of the 500 years lasting dominance of print. He saw this end coming by the "age of Marconi", which means by the invention of wireless telegraphy through the Italian physicist Guglielmo Marconi in 1894. Indeed this invention enabled the rise of broadcasting, the new electronic media in the beginning and middle of 20th century. McLuhan predicted that the new media of radio and television would lead to an electronic network of the existing societies to a single "global tribe" living in a "global village" which would be created electronically. The printed word would have to make way for the spoken word.

No doubt: Broadcasting had its influence on the habits of reception of information. Whereas in the era of print one mainly got information by reading (books, newspapers), they now were available by listening (to the radio) and watching (television). For their audiences radio and television had to prepare the information in a way that made them easily accessible. There was no possibility to look into an encyclopedia while listening to broadcasted news – the background information necessary for understanding had to be given immediately within the respective program.

It was not by chance that at that time and for an audience socialized by radio and television the Bible Societies developed a new type of Bible Translation: The Good News. With its principle of dynamic equivalency the Good News

translation supplied the information needed to understand a specific biblical term via explication immediately within the text. This way of translating was very successful. It brought people back to read and understand the Bible which otherwise may have lost their interest in the Bible simply because in secularized societies they no longer were able to understand the classical Bible translations like King James – or Luther.

2.1.2. Something new is emerging: The "Internet-Galaxy"

At the latest in the early 1990th, the relevant set of media started changing again – and even faster and more profound than with the changes provoked before by radio and television. We speak of the "Digital Revolution" because its consequences will be or already are as far reaching as the "Industrial Revolution" of the 18th and 19th century. We may also call it the emerging "Internet-Galaxy", changing the world more dramatically than the "Gutenberg Galaxy" did from the 15th century onwards. The innovative technological development behind these developments would be a story of its own. So I will only you give some keywords for a draft of the picture.

The computer technology goes back to the 1940th. But it was only in the 1970th and the 1980th that the "Personal Computers" became affordable for everybody, and in the 1990th the Internet started its triumph through the countries and societies worldwide. Before, it had been a tool for specialists only – in the armies and at universities, but then it became accessible and affordable by every person. Quickly the World Wide Web developed to be the favorite channel for the spread of any kind information and at the same time for lots of commercial transactions. The classical media for information – newspaper, radio, television – at least developed an online branch or went directly online, and communication via the "good old" letters or faxes became snail mail and was more or less replaced by email. At the beginning of the new millennium Social Media joined the picture with even more direct exchange of information between the individuals and all sorts of user-generated content.

A special mile-stone in this development was the coming up of mobile devices such as laptops and – even more important – smart phones and tablets. Although this is a rather new technology – we saw the first iPhone only in 2007 – it spread almost explosively. From all sorts of use of the World Wide Web, it

is the mobile Internet that develops most rapidly. It is said that in the year 2013 almost 2 billion people worldwide used the mobile Internet. (Who in the industrial societies of today － or should I ask: who in this room? － can imagine 'surviving' without a smartphone only the shortest amount of time?)

2.2. The influence of the digital media on the culture of reading

2.2.1. More stuff struggling for our attention

With the new digital media, reading moved from paper to screen. This means a dramatic change in a 5000 years old technique of civilization: the way of reading. In the era of radio and television one could have expected that reading would lose its predominant importance for our civilization and be replaced by listening and viewing. In the middle of the 1990th in Germany, we learned from some researches (conducted for example by the German "foundation for reading"/Stiftung Lesen) that the young generation would read less and less in the future. － By the way, just as an aside: At that time a young teacher in Great Britain, a broke single parent, wrote a book, titled *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* (Harry Potter und der Stein der Weisen), the first print run was 500 copies, mostly distributed to British libraries － until now the book sold up to 500 million copies worldwide!

Not only because of Harry Potter but mainly because of the digital media, reading experiences some kind of Renaissance. But reading in the digital world is not the same as it was in the Gutenberg era. Never since mankind developed the ability to read and write individuals had so many ways and channels for reading, and never before they are addressed more directly than through these channels: via email or text messages, on Facebook, Twitter or WhatsApp, on websites and by blogs － a multitude of ways that can hardly be counted. Reading really has become omnipresent.

What at first glance looks like Paradise on Earth for all publishing houses, bears － at second glance － dangers, problems and challenges as well. On a more general level, reading online automatically means that we do no longer read alone. Not only in the sense of loneliness but also in the sense that others know exactly what we do. There is a shadow hanging over our practice of reading in the Brave New (Media) World. From George Orwell's *1984* to Laura Poitras's

Citizenfour ― the big five giants of the internet, Amazon, Google, Facebook, Microsoft and Apple, know what we read, just as they know where we are or what we buy. To a certain extend they can predict what we will do. Online shops already make suggestions of what we should buy – and sometimes know better what we like than our best friend with whom we usually go shopping. Do we want such omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent "co-readers" to whom we are surrendered while reading the Bible online? Do we really want to share our spiritual experiences with Google, Facebook, etc.? Do we want them to know about our fears and doubts?

We have to be aware of this negative side of the New Media. As Bible Societies of the 21st century we do not have any alternative to making use of them to fulfill our Bible missionary task. But we have to be conscious of the fact, that a virtual church cannot replace the local church where people come together to find comfort and salvation, to mourn and to praise and to be on their way towards the Kingdom of God.

On a more specific level we have to be aware of how the New Media changes the habits of reading. In 2010 the American journalist and finalist for the 2011 Pulitzer Prize in General Nonfiction, Nicholas Carr, published his ― in the meantime quite famous ― book *The Shallows (Die Untiefe): What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains*. In this book he describes very impressively the fascinating power of the Internet:

"For well over a decade now, I've been spending a lot of time online, searching and surfing and sometimes adding to the great databases of the Internet. The Web's been a godsend (!) to me as a writer. Research that once required days in the stacks or periodical rooms of libraries can now be done in minutes. A few Google searches, some quick clicks on hyperlinks, and I've got to telltale fact of the pithy quote I was after. I couldn't begin to tally the hours or the gallons of gasoline the Net has saved me. I do most of my banking and a lot of my shopping online. I use my browser to pay my bills, schedule my appointments, book flights and hotel rooms, renew my driver's license, send invitations and greeting cards. Even when I'm not working, I'm as likely as not to be foraging in the Web's data thickets – reading and writing e-mails, scanning headlines and blog posts, following Facebook updates, watching video streams, downloading music, or just tripping lightly from link to link to link.

The Net has become my all-purpose medium, the conduit for most of the information that flows through my eyes and ears and into my mind."

But at the same time Carr observes that there is another side of this fascinating world – an effect on the user that he did not foresee:

> "I feel it most strongly when I'm reading. I used to find it easy to immerse myself in a book or a lengthy article. My mind would get caught up in the twists of the narrative or the turn of arguments and I'd spend hours strolling through long stretches of prose. That's rarely the case anymore. Now my concentration starts to drift after a page or two. I get fidgety, lose the thread, begin looking for something else to do. I feel like I'm always dragging my wayward brain back to the text. The deep reading that used to come naturally has become a struggle."

Carr even had to confess:

> "I began worrying about my inability to pay attention of one thing for more than a couple minutes. ⋯ My brain, I realized ⋯ was hungry. It was demanding to be fed the way the Net fed it – and the more it was fed, the hungrier it became. Even when I was away from my computer, I yearned to check e-mail, click links, do some Googling. I wanted to be connected." So finally "I missed my old brain." (p. 6)

What Carr describes are the two sides of the same coin.

2.2.2. Informational reading versus deep reading

It is exactly this phenomenon that came into the focus of neurological research, related to the name of Maryanne Wolf. Wolf is an acknowledged expert in her field of work with many a title and a long list of publications. Her most popular book, *Proust and the Squid (Tintenfisch): The story and Science of the Reading Brain*, has received numerous awards and was translated in many languages. In this book Wolf explores the relationship between reading – represented by the French writer Marcel Proust and his ideas in "On Reading" – and brains – represented by the squid, one of the model organisms of neuroscience:

> "The brain's design made reading possible, and reading's design

changed the brain in multiple, critical, still evolving ways. The reciprocal dynamics shine through the birth of writing in the species and through the acquisition of reading in the child."

That means: If reading changes in the digital media, this has as consequence that the neurological structures of our brains will automatically adapt to the new demands. Reading online is a 'pick and choose' kind of reading. There is always a multitude of information available – this is what you expect the Internet to be – and you only have a short attention span and need to have mastered the art of fast orientation in order not to get lost. Using a picture of the television world, the literal channel-hopping, one could imagine a term like zap-reading for readers going randomly from one piece of information to another. This way of reading is always combined with a certain "informational shortsightedness". This means that the users only perceive parts of a text – a website or web-application – and this part usually only superficially.

This leads Maryanne Wolf to distinguish between two ways of reading:
- the classical "deep reading" (usually associated with the reading of books or articles of special interest)
- the emerging "informational reading" aiming at getting as much information out of a text in the shortest amount of time (usually associated with the Internet).

It is the deep reading which generates the hermeneutical circle between reader and text. The reader brings into the text his expectations, experiences and previous knowledge but at the same time the text influences the reader with his view and understanding of the world, with the messages it sends and the feelings it provokes. Thus, deep reading never leaves the reader unchanged, the text which is read becomes an integrated part of the reader's live.

But this way of reading seems to be in danger today. More and more people want to read faster and get more information. Time has become short nowadays, and we don't want to "waste" it for slow deep reading. The magic of reading seems to disappear. With the new media for the first time we must not only decide *what* we read, but also *how* we want to read. Do we want to read deeply or superficially – exactly or quickly? And we have to decide that before we start reading.

Bible Societies being faced with the question which kind of reading they would prefer for readers of the Bible will surly go for the deep reader. The Bible has a message to tell: The message of God's love for the universe and for mankind. It is a message that really changes our perspective: An individual is no longer only an autonomous subject but at the same time part of God's creation and of the history of salvation by which God leads his creation to its eternal salvation. It is obvious that this is not a message that can be realized by fast informational reading. The Bible requires deep reading − the way of reading that seems to decrease. So the real question is: Do we as Bible Societies have any concepts to meet this trend − or can we even find ways to benefit in the end from the 'renaissance of reading'?

These questions − to be honest: mainly the first one − were the starting point for a development process within in the German Bible Society at which end stood the BasisBibel: not only a new Bible translation, but also as a Cross Media/Multi Format concept of publication for the Bible in the digital era. And that's what I want to share with you in the last part of my lecture today. One has to be aware of the fact that until now Bible Translations have always been made for print − although in our times they also were used in the New Media. But being *used* in the New Media is not the same as being *made* for the New Media. Under this respect the German BasisBibel was the first Bible translation for ordinary Bible readers which from its very beginning was consequently designated for the 'dual use': for reading on paper as well as on screen. So for now the concept of the BasisBible may serve as a case study of what can be possible in making the Bible attractive (again) in the digital era.

2.3. The BasisBible: A Cross Media Concept for the Digital Era

The term "Cross Media" originally goes back to the desktop-publishing process and means the media-neutral handling of a certain content of data for different sorts of publications. It was taken over from online-journalism and today describes the convergence of the different media: Print, radio, television, the traditional and mobile web. Cross Media is not only the taking over of a given content from one media, for instance a newspaper, to another, for instance a website, but the integration of different sorts and techniques of

information-sharing into an integral concept from production to distribution.

For the Bible the Cross Media approach includes three parts:
- The translation itself
- Additional (study-)material
- Digital communication and social media as a means to connect to our readers

2.3.1. The BasisBible's Concept of Translation

The readers of the digital era are impatient, run quickly out of time and interest, and an ever-increasing number of them uses mobile devices – the screens of which become smaller and smaller: Just look at the Apple Watch! So the first question is: What do texts – and especially texts from the Bible – need to look like, in order be accessible for reading on this kind of screens? (Sceptics may even ask whether it was at all possible to adapt the Bible to such an environment as we cannot simply alter or reduce its content.)

Adapting complex texts to small screens is an especially challenging endeavor for the German language: German is famous for its long and complicated sentences with numerous subordinate clauses, where the verbs of these subordinate clauses only come at the very end and words can be combined to new meanings by just adding one to another or to an already existing combination. But to make a long story short: GBS found a way for a Bible translation which is appropriate to the new media without reducing the demands of the text. The clue was to simplify the *structure* of the language that is used in the BasisBible, while keeping the content as it is. This means in practice:

- Short sentences (the rule of 16 words – "16-Wörter-Regel)

We restricted the length of sentences to not more than 16 words. German linguists teach that information given in spoken language usually comprise between 7 and 14 words which the listeners are able to keep in mind. Given the fact that it is a little bit easier to remember a text if you *read* it, 16 words means a length that can easily be received. Above that the maximum of one subordinate clause is allowed in the language of the BasisBible.

- Linear sequence of information (the rule of the pearls of a chain –
"Perlenkettenregel")

The language of the BasisBible has to be structured very clearly. We follow
the principle of a linear sequence of information – one piece of information after
the other in a logical order – like pearls on a chain. So a person who reads or
listens to a text in the BasisBible translation always gets the information
necessary to understand the next information. We even often follow the rule of
the SPO-order: subject – predicate – object, which is constitutive for the English
grammar, but definitely not for German.

- Typography and the rhythm of language (the rule of breathing units – "Regel
des Sprach- und Atemrhythmus")

This structure of information is also shown in the typography of the
BasisBible. The lines of printed text do not result by chance but always contain a
certain unit of information. Therefore the lines already have to be determined
during the process of translation and even influence the translation. If a
translator realizes that he would need one and a half line for a certain unit of
information he will need to check whether he can find a shorter translation that
fits in one line or whether it would be better to form two units of information in
two lines. The result is a really rhythmical language following the rhythm of
breath and spoken language.

By the way: The famous Jewish Bible translator Martin Buber did the same in
his Bible translation dating back to the 1920's – although he never ever thought
of any New Media. Buber already underlined the importance of rhythm for a
language that people would like to hear or read. For him the rhythm of breath is
constitutive for the units of information a speaker can produce and a listener can
understand without too much effort. Buber called these units "kola". In his Bible
translation he already marked the "kola" by the printed lines – the BasisBible
does the same.

Together with the other features (short sentences, linear sequence of
information) the text of the BasisBible is extremely easy to read – not only in the
printed book but also on the small screens of a smartphone and we claim: The
same will apply to the even smaller screens of the Apple watch and similar
devices we have to expect. – Interestingly enough, this is at the same time true

for any audio presentation of the BasisBible. Read in a Sunday service or in a youth group: one always gets the feedback that the listeners could get the message of this special Bible reading very well. Thus this concept of translation and the way it makes us 'use' the German language is the first step to a text, that allows an understanding so far only attributed only to deep reading – without the actual 'deep reading' described above.

2.3.2. Additional material and "rich media": Reader's helps to understand the text

Everything that was said concerning the concept of translation applies to any edition of the BasisBible: from the printed editions to all digital ones, be it website or App. But above that the BasisBible as a Cross Media project exploits the advantages of the New Media for its translation strategy. First of all the electronic editions add the possibilities of strong engines for searching within the Bible text. But this is not yet something special, as all electronic Bibles use these possibilities.

To understand what is special for the BasisBible-concept, we first have to look back about 45 years to the "Good News"-type of dynamic equivalent Bible translation in order to realize the value of the New Media for Bible translations: The Good News-type Bible translations already addressed unchurched readers and were easily to understand. But if we look into the translation strategy of the Good News we realize that these translation-strategies were developed at a time when one only had printed books. What the Good News-type of translations do, is to concentrate on giving the readers the *sense* of a Biblical text, while abstaining from the idea one could preserve its *form* at the same time. If modern readers would need extra information, which was understood by itself for the original readers or listeners, the translators of the Good News only could give this information by explication, which means by putting it explicitly into the text whereas the original text contained this information only implicitly. At the end there is quite a piece of extra text in the Good News translations. They are reasonably longer than the original Bible text in Hebrew or Greek and tend to long sentences respectively long units of information. The Good News-type translations are more or less literary, and even become more literary when being revised. Bible Societies are very well aware of the fact that revisions usually

tend to higher the level of language in a Bible translation.

We at GBS see the BasisBibel in the Good-News-Tradition in ways of supplementing implicit information for the benefit of better understanding the Bible. But drawing on the possibilities of the New Media, the BasisBible can go new ways to give this extra information to its readers. In the BasisBible we hyperlink the words in Bible text for which background information is given. The links lead the reader to a broad range of extra-material about the world of the Bible: the habits and ways of life, the customs and religions, the geography and history. This extra information is given on two levels: short explanations for those who do not want to go really into the depth, and extensive articles for those who want to know more. These extensive articles build a real Bible-encyclopedia combining text, picture material from places and archeological findings and maps. Even video material from the UBS-videos "Bible lands as classroom" is presented.

It is obvious that this range of extra-material could never have been printed between the two cover-pages of a printed book. But in the world of electronic publishing we don't have any restriction of place (except that of memory space which we can neglect here). Nevertheless the concept of hyperlink-information does not only work for electronic editions but also for the printed ones. We apply it also to print edition by printing a selection of the words with a link in an extra color, leading to the short explanation in the margin. At the same time the page number is formed as a tiny URL. If a reader puts that into his browser – or simply the page number to his App – he or she goes directly to exactly the same part of the text on the BasisBible website or in the App. Here, the short explanation appears as mouse-over text, and if you click on it you will get the extensive articles I mentioned above. This allows a real Cross-Media reading experience bringing together the printed book with the full range of extra-information that is reserved to electronic editions of the BasisBible. And even more is possible: One could for example think of also making available the audio edition.

By the possibilities of the electronic media the BasisBible turns out to be both: a 'normal' Bible as well as a study Bible: One can only read the text, but if he or she feels like it, can also dig deeper. All the extra-information is an offer that one *may* use, but *does not have to*. The autonomous user decides for him- or

herself how much additional information he or she needs and which links he or she wants to open. So the concept of the BasisBible consequently uses the habit of clicking, customary to the New Media, where the landing points of the clicking never draw the attention too far away from text. Instead they may lead the reader deeper into the text − without effort or perhaps even without realizing it. So again, this second part of the BasisBible concept opens a way to the understanding of the text so far only attributed to 'deep reading' − and without the exertions of the actual 'deep reading'.

And again, one can easily think other kinds of extra material − Bible commentaries or inputs for meditating the text. At the end of the day, they all may contribute to turning the attempt for informational reading into a deep reading experience that allows the Bible to enter into people's brains and hearts.

2.3.3. Digital communication and social media as a means to connect to our readers

To read a book is something which a person usually does for him- or herself. Usually, we read alone. To some extend the Bible is an exception if we think of Bible reading groups or other church groups which read a Bible and talk about it. But still we also have single Bible readers who do their own individual Bible studies. At any rate, in the world of traditional reading, publishes don't have much contact with their readers, at least when the actual reading starts. The New Media again opens new ways. Contact and exchange among readers as well as between readers and publishers becomes more and more common as well easy. This begins with reader's book reviews which we find on platforms like Amazon.com from where we can order books and ends at the common writing of a novel, when a writer builds a community with his readers who decide how the story of a novel has to develop.

Bible Societies and Bible Translators definitively would not change the biblical stories by any means. We have no need for another "New Testament" or any such thing, but certainly for testimonials about good experiences with Bible reading. The connecting of people in the New Media opens the space for social reading; that means: for sharing, liking, commenting on and discussing the Bible and its message with others. For the BasisBible the German Bible Society established a Facebook-Site www.facebook.com/basisbibel.de. Through this

site we can keep in touch with people who are interested in the BasisBible. The
site started in 2009 and now has almost 7000 "friends" – among them are experts
like pastors and teachers, as well as young people, confirmation classes, but also
people who have little contact to the Bible. Every day there is one post by GBS –
a short passage from the Bible, sometimes combined with a picture or a graphic,
a link or a video. During last Lent we had a daily stimulus connected to the
fasting campaign of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD). This year's
motto was: "You are pretty" – seven weeks without despising (7 Wochen ohne
Runtermachen). For the Facebook-post we combined a despising word with an
encouraging verse from the BasisBible as a way to drive out despising thoughts.
Many of these combinations included puns, which I cannot translate, but there is
one that will work in English, too: The post from March 12th combines the
headline 'weak' with Psalm 18:30: "Indeed, by You I can run against a fortress.
By my God I can leap over a wall." Similar posts we give before Christmas as a
kind of Advent-calendar. These posts regularly get a lot of "likes" and our
BasisBible friends share them with their friends. Maybe you want to have a look
at the latest post later this day?

Another way of getting in touch with our audience through digital
communication is a group of "test readers" who get newly translated texts of the
BasisBible together with an extensive questionnaire. By this method our
translators can find out whether their translation works or where people have
difficulties of understanding and obviously some more work has to be done. We
also test certain terms, for instance the term "cult" for pagan religious activities
in the Old Testament. Actually the German word "Kult" is quite common in
modern language –as well as in English, also with quite similar connotations (at
least according to my dictionary); for example the movie 'Blues Brothers' is
considered to be a 'Kultfilm'. But at the same time within the framework of the
Old Testament "Kult" is a theological term, and we are not sure if and how our
readers will understand it. By the test readers we are able to find out about these
things before the translation is published. One could say that this way of
test-reading and getting feedback from our readers is a modern form of what
Martin Luther called "to look at people's mouth" – the way they speak – to do
the Bible translation accordingly. (To avoid any misunderstanding: The
BasisBible translation is not meant to be crowd-made translation.)

The Social Media activities of the German Bible Society, described above, are only examples of what can be done in Bible related digital communication activities. One could think of establishing communities who share their experiences in Bible reading or discuss difficult passages accompanied by a pastor or a layperson with the respective competence or of even other activities. Or less spiritual and more publishing house oriented: One can engage the readers in the process of production by ways of giving them a vote for example when it comes to the question of colors for covers − and thus establishing a kind of customer loyalty Bible Societies as enterprises also need.

With both approaches the aim always is to attract attention to the Bible and to get people in contact with the Bible who otherwise would not think about reading it. At the moment, experts see a movement away from 'boring' books towards more 'cool' and interesting Social Media reading among the younger generation. In order to fulfill our task as Bible Societies − to engage people in Bible reading − we cannot simply wait for people to approach us, but we have to go to where the traffic is instead: we have to engage in digital communication activities. One Bible verse a day which reaches people's hearts is already good in itself. But it may also open the door to what turns out in the end to be a long lasting friendship with the Bible and God. And think of people who are not able or simply not willing to join a Bible reading group because they are handicapped, live too far away from existing groups or just want to test whether this 'Bible stuff' is a possibility for them − they all can be part of and benefit from "virtual" groups. The opportunities of the digital era are great.

Let me end my lecture with a personal remark regarding the challenges of Bible reading today, be it a traditional printed Bible or a New Media Bible: Reading means meeting, means getting to know somebody or something: When we read, we meet the author of the text, we get to know the characters he introduces and the world they live in. When we engage in Bible reading, two more 'meeting points' (if I may use this word) appear on the scene: We also get to know our Brothers and Sisters, with whom we are united in Christ, our Lord and Redeemer. And finally we meet God, our Creator, who holds us in his hands and leads us to the eternal aim of life. That's a core message of the 16th century Reform Movement. And that's the reason why Luther encouraged the people of his time as well as us today to keep on reading the Bible.

In the night before his death on February 18th 1546 Luther wrote some words on a piece of paper which may serve as résumé of his life's work: "No one should think to have tasted enough of Holy Scripture, unless he has directed the churches for a hundred years with prophets like Elija and Elisha, John the Baptist, Christ and the apostles. We are beggars: that is the truth."

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